

RECOGNIZING THE RAILROAD COMMISSION OF TEXAS' 130TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. VAN TAYLOR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. TAYLOR. Madam Speaker, today, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Railroad Commission of Texas on its 130th anniversary.

Established in 1891 by the Texas Constitution, the Railroad Commission of Texas (RRC) was created for the purpose preventing discrimination in railroad charges and establishing reasonable tariffs. As the first regulatory agency created in the State of Texas, their primary responsibility included covering rates and operations of railroads, terminals, wharves and express companies.

In 1917, the Texas Legislature expanded the Commission's authority after declaring pipelines to be common carriers, thereby providing the agency the ability to administer conservation laws related to oil and gas. In March 1919, their jurisdiction would once again increase to include pipeline safety as well as the safety of alternative fuels, natural gas utilities, and the surface mining of coal and uranium.

In the decades which would follow, the RRC's authority evolved to meet the needs of our rapidly growing state. While its rail functions have since been transferred to the Texas Department of Transportation, the Commission's oversight has extended to include not only oil and gas exploration and production, but also pipeline transporters, the natural gas and hazardous liquid pipeline industry, natural gas utilities, the LP-gas industry, and coal and uranium surface mining operations.

In recent years, the Commission has modernized technology for increased efficiency and has expanded transparency by providing the public with needed tools to access agency information. Further, the dedicated efforts of its professionals have contributed to the streamlining of operations while promoting increased innovation and energy independence.

For over 130 years the Railroad Commission of Texas has maintained a unified and focused mission of protecting the public, environment, and economy of Texas. As the oil and gas industry continues to be an essential component of Texas' success story, I congratulate the Railroad Commission of Texas and its employees on this milestone anniversary and wish them continued success as they continue to protect the state's natural resources, environment, and public safety.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FAIR COLA FOR SENIORS ACT OF 2021

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. GARAMENDI. Madam Speaker, today I introduced the Fair COLA for Seniors Act of 2021, which would require using the Consumer Price Index for the Elderly (CPI-E) when calculating cost of living adjustments (COLAs) for federal retirement programs. The proposed index would adjust the benefits pro-

grams such as Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, civil service retirement, military retirement, veterans' pensions and compensations, and other retirement programs.

Current law uses the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which measures costs solely of working individuals—unlike most Social Security beneficiaries. Using CPI-W does not adequately consider the rising expenditures of retirement, such as housing and healthcare costs. This inadequate accounting amounts to an effective decrease in benefits for those who rely on these federal programs. The proposed change will lead to increased COLAs, ensuring that seniors are able to keep up with the rising costs of their real-world expenses.

Madam Speaker, I thank Representatives PINGREE (D-ME), BEATTY (D-OH), FITZPATRICK (R-PA), STRICKLAND (D-WA), MOULTON (D-MA), BOYLE (D-PA), SABLAN (D-MP), NAPOLITANO (D-CA), DEUTCH (D-FL), MCNERNEY (D-CA), MCCOLLUM (D-MN), KILMER (D-WA), BROWN (D-MD), POCAN (D-WI), KUSTER (D-NH), SPEIER (D-CA), ESHOO (D-CA), MOORE (D-WI), and COHEN (D-TN), SIRES (D-NJ), KAPTUR (D-OH), LIEU (D-CA), WASSERMAN SCHULTZ (D-FL) for their support as original cosponsors. I look forward to working with the Chairpersons of the Ways and Means, Veterans' Affairs, Oversight and Reform, and Armed Services Committees to ensure this critical piece of legislation becomes law.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL T. MCCAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. MCCAUL. Madam Speaker, I missed votes due to circumstances beyond my control.

Had I been present, I would have voted NAY on Roll Call No. 197.

RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WILLIAM BEAUMONT ARMY MEDICAL CENTER

HON. VERONICA ESCOBAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Ms. ESCOBAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 100th Anniversary of the opening of William Beaumont Army Medical Center in Fort Bliss, Texas.

The William Beaumont Army Medical Center first opened in July 1, 1921 and has since become a major medical asset for the U.S. Army—serving the needs of countless soldiers, veterans, military families, and El Paso residents. Whether through assisting victims of the August 3rd, 2019 domestic terrorist shooting or working day and night during the COVID-19 pandemic, the medical center has always helped our community and continues to be an invaluable resource for El Pasoans.

As the United States Army prepares to open one of the most advanced medical facilities in the country, the El Paso community is thankful for the Army's support and wishes William

Beaumont Army Medical Center the best of luck as it begins its years of service.

Again, I am pleased to recognize the opening of William Beaumont Army Medical Center.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE LIBRARY

HON. VIRGINIA FOXX

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, on June 29, 2021, during debate on H.R. 3005, To direct the Joint Committee on the Library to replace the bust of Roger Brooke Taney in the Old Supreme Court Chamber of the United States Capitol with a bust of Thurgood Marshall to be obtained by the Joint Committee on the Library and to remove certain statues from areas of the United States Capitol which are accessible to the public, to remove all statues of individuals who voluntarily served the Confederate States of America from display in the United States Capitol, and for other purposes, one of my colleagues in the majority argued that she held no responsibility for delays in approving North Carolina's request to replace the Charles Aycock statue, due to the Joint Committee on the Library (JCL) only formally organizing on June 23 for the 117th Congress.

However, this argument left out important context about the series of events related to the JCL this year. As my colleague knows, Democrats have controlled both the House and the Senate since January and at any time could have passed their respective resolutions appointing members to the JCL, allowing it to organize. But it took until April 16 and May 26 for the House and Senate to pass their respective resolutions. Even with those delays, the committee could still have been organized at any point after May 26. Yet it still took nearly a month, until June 23, for the committee to formally organize. Throughout this entire Congress, the Democrats have been in the driver seat of the JCL, despite my colleague's representation otherwise.

It is clear that Democrats have needlessly delayed the work of the JCL. Therefore, as I said in my remarks, if Democrats were truly concerned about the presence of offensive statues in the U.S. Capitol, they might start by being quicker to act on the business of the Joint Committee on the Library.

TRIBUTE TO FORMER ALABAMA CONGRESSMAN SONNY CALLAHAN

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to pay tribute to the memory of one of my closest friends, former Congressman H.L. "Sonny" Callahan, the gentleman from the great state of Alabama, who peacefully passed away on June 25, 2021. Sonny and I became quick friends upon his arrival to Washington in 1985. His humor and zeal for practical jokes were as endearing on Capitol Hill as his ability to forge alliances across the aisle to create effective policy and legislation for the American people.

As colleagues on the Appropriations Committee, Sonny and I traveled the world together, meeting with leaders from Singapore to Argentina to Israel and many nations in between. His gregarious nature was as prevalent during those international meetings as it was at home in the heart of Alabama. Sonny extended genuine kindness and friendship to folks across all walks of life and never lost the staunch work ethic that helped him build a successful trucking business in Alabama. Before being elected to Congress as a registered Republican, Sonny dedicated 12 years to the Alabama state legislature, serving both chambers as a registered Democrat—proving he could get along with leaders of all political persuasions.

I always had great admiration for the fact that Sonny was a Navy Veteran of the Korean War. There was no one he fought harder for in Washington than our veterans and current members of the U.S. Armed Forces. He believed in building a stronger national defense, advocating for better care for our veterans, and reinforcing foreign aid for key allies in the Middle East, especially Israel.

It is one of the greatest honors of my lifetime to have served alongside my friend Sonny for 18 years in the U.S. House of Representatives. As President Abraham Lincoln once wrote, “the better part of one’s life consists of his friendships.” Sonny Callahan is one of the most beloved leaders of Alabama and Washington, D.C., and I will always consider him one of my closest friends. My wife Cynthia and I extend our deepest heartfelt sympathy to the Callahan family and the great wealth of friends he made across the country, and indeed around the globe.

INVESTING IN A NEW VISION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND SURFACE TRANSPORTATION IN AMERICA ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. GERALD E. CONNOLLY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 30, 2021

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the INVEST Act.

This bill represents a substantial investment in American infrastructure that will touch every corner of this country.

It will rebuild crumbling highways and bridges, reduce traffic congestion, enhance auto and pedestrian safety, expand transit options, help local governments finance their infrastructure and capital needs, and commit our nation to clean energy future.

I want to thank Chairman DEFAZIO and Chairwoman NORTON for working with me to include in this bill the Metro Accountability and Investment Act (H.R. 694), which helps the federal government meet its financial obligations to the national capital’s transit system.

The bill increases the existing federal commitment to Metro, provides annual operating funds for the first time, and conditions new funding on important accountability and ethics reforms that will strengthen the role and independence of the WMATA Inspector General.

I also welcome the reinstatement of the Build American Bonds program, a direct subsidy bond program that helps municipalities

access financing for infrastructure project and which I have previously championed with my own legislation.

INVESTING IN A NEW VISION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND SURFACE TRANSPORTATION IN AMERICA ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 30, 2021

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as the senior Texas Member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, I strongly support House passage of H.R. 3684, the INVEST in America Act. I inserted numerous provisions into the bill, including one to establish a grants program in the Department of Transportation to develop transportation workforce training programs for workers adversely affected by industry automation, and another to assist communities to retrofit transportation infrastructure that creates obstacles to their mobility and employment opportunities to provide greater transportation equity.

The INVEST in America Act authorizes a tremendous funding boost to our nation’s surface transportation and infrastructure system, providing just under \$550 billion over five years and bringing over \$27 billion to my state of Texas. In addition to highways, roads and bridges, the bill makes a substantive investment in our nation’s transit system as well as our passenger and freight rail system, and makes great strides to improve environmentally friendly policies by encouraging and funding alternative modes of transportation and decreasing traffic congestion to reduce carbon emissions and the harmful effects of climate change. Moreover, according to the Council of Economic Advisors, for every \$1 billion in Federal highway and transit investment, approximately 13,000 well-paying domestic jobs are supported for one year.

With respect to funding for passenger and freight rail, the bill provides a total of \$95 billion in authorized funding, while specifically:

Tripling funding for Amtrak to \$32 billion.

Providing funding for corridor planning and development of high-speed rail projects such as the Texas Central project, a proposed high-speed rail line between Dallas and Houston.

Improving rail safety by addressing highway-rail grade crossings needs, requiring additional rail safety inspectors, addressing trespasser and suicide fatalities, and eliminating gaps in railroad safety.

My congressional district, Texas’ 30th, includes the International Inland Port of Dallas (IIPOD), an intermodal and logistics district that encompasses 7,500 acres and five municipalities while supporting over 17,000 jobs. The Dallas Inland Port is also supported by Union Pacific, who added an intermodal terminal nearly 20 years ago to increase Class I’s Dallas/Ft. Worth container capacity. The Union Pacific Dallas Intermodal Terminal also provides intermodal access to the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach.

The freight railroads invest \$25 billion per year of their own private money into their networks and are critical partners in efforts to reduce transportation-related greenhouse gas

emissions. Given the importance of freight rail, not only to the Inland Port of Dallas but to ports nationwide, I encourage the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure to continue to work with the freight railroad industry as the INVEST Act advances towards a House-Senate conference committee.

RECOGNIZING THADDEUS C. SHEEHY, SR. FOR HIS RETIREMENT FROM 25 YEARS OF COACHING MARYLAND’S YOUTH THROUGH CLUB LACROSSE

HON. ANTHONY G. BROWN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 1, 2021

Mr. BROWN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Thaddeus C. Sheehy, Sr., upon his retirement from 25 years of coaching Maryland’s youth through club lacrosse.

Coach Sheehy served the community as a dedicated volunteer, coaching Maryland’s sons by not only teaching them the game of lacrosse but also instilling in them life lessons along the way. This commitment to help build character in his players and ensure their growth as leaders also extended to his own family, as Mr. Sheehy coached his three sons, Thaddeus, Jr., Sean, and Liam.

Coach Sheehy, a 1988 graduate of Saint Mary’s Parish High School located in downtown Annapolis, learned the importance of servant leadership through Saint Mary’s varsity lacrosse program. Coach Sheehy took this servant leadership philosophy into the Annapolis Lacrosse Club Bay Raiders, with the mission to help young men get better at the sport they love while giving back to their community and those who protect it.

Francis McAndrews, who coached with Mr. Sheehy for 18 years including his last season as the Face-Off Coach of the Bay Raiders, commended his dedication and skills noting, “Coach Sheehy placed the development of the entire player at the forefront of the team’s priorities. For 18 years I worked alongside him to build leadership through the C-4: character, commitment, confidence, and courage in our young men, and I am proud to call Tad my friend. Tad had a successful style of building character through humor and was known to give each boy on the team a nickname—and very often those nicknames stuck well after their lacrosse careers!” Coach Sheehy could often be heard asking his players—“what have you done for your academics, what have you done for your family, and what have you done for lacrosse today?”

Sheehy coached the Annapolis Lacrosse Club Bay Raiders to be Maryland State Champions in 2015 and helped to take four teams to Anne Arundel County Champions in 2014, 2015 and 2016. He was honored with the Lifetime Achievement in Coaching Award by the Annapolis Lacrosse Club Bay Raiders, while at his last lacrosse tournament on June 20, 2021.

I am honored to recognize Coach Sheehy today for his 25-year commitment to help shape Maryland’s young men and athletes into servant leaders, and for his leading by example through his service to the Annapolis community.